

FREED HOFFMAN

1880-1959



The botanical career of Mr. Freedom W. Hoffman, who died at his home near Guerneville, California, 13 November 1959, spanned a fifty-year period. Freed was born at Knights Landing, Yolo County, 30 January 1880, where he lived until he went away to school at about the age of fifteen. As his mother was of French descent, Freed learned, as a child, to speak French and he retained his fluency and interest in this language throughout his life. Following his graduation from Chico Normal School he studied art in New York City for several years. Upon his return to California he began a teaching career in which he achieved considerable success for something over a decade.

On 24 August 1907, Freed married Jemella Gertrude Peugh. Throughout the forty-seven years of their married life, Jimmy regularly accompanied Freed on trips into the remote back country. In the early days such trips were made with burro or mule, while later a Jeep served a similar purpose.

While at Berkeley soon after his marriage, Freed became principal of the LeConte School, to which he often referred in later years as the first Junior High School in America. At about this time Freed studied with Professor Setchell and Professor Gardner in the Botany Department at the University of California at Berkeley. He mentioned to me several times Dr. Gardner's offer of a teaching assistantship which, while it tempted him, was rejected in favor of a teaching position at San Francisco Normal School.

I first met Freed and Jimmy at their home near Guerneville in the early summer of 1941. Freed had sent some interesting specimens of *Streptanthus* to the Herbarium at the University of California, Berkeley, for identification. In order to meet the collector and see the populations of plants, I drove to Guerneville. From the beginning of our eighteen-year friendship I was charmed by Freed. His slow, patient, deliberate approach to problems made a real impression on me.

Because I was interested in *Streptanthus* and its distribution in relation to serpentine soils, because I enjoyed being with Freed and Jimmy, and because I could collect abundant fresh flowering plant material near Guerneville for class use, I went back to the Hoffmans' several times during the summer of 1941. On one occasion Freed and I spent several days beginning the construction of a cabin on a remote hunting claim, which Freed had proven to be still part of the public domain in 1910 and 1911 even though it had previously changed hands several times in land deals. Careful search of land office records and many weekends spent surveying had finally enabled him to file on the quarter section as a hunting claim. Its chief value lay in the existence of a spring not far below a ridge top. Freed and I hunted deer, fruitlessly, in the early mornings and the early evenings. During the day we began a cabin to replace the old one built by Freed in 1911. As we leisurely cut and notched the sill logs, Freed recounted, interspersed with discussions of the Pythagorean theorem, his reasons for leaving teaching to become an orchardist.

Freed Hoffman was a man with a very considerable artistic talent. His oils and watercolors with which their home and guest cottage were hung made a lasting impression on all who saw them. The intricate woodcarving on the massive lauan loom which he built for Jimmy was still another evidence of his creative ability. As a carpenter, stone mason, botanist, botanical artist, Freed's accomplishments were of professional quality. Certainly his abilities as a teacher were equally great. Yet he resigned his teaching position, left a career for which he seemed well fitted, and still in his thirties, took over the management of the extensive orchards owned by himself and Jimmy near Guerneville.

With brush and palette, with hammer and saw, with pruning hook and picking basket and ultimately with plant press and seed bed, Freed found that he could see and sense the results of his labors almost immediately, while in teaching often many years passed before results were evident. Freed had the kind of patient sensitivity that would lead him to cut down his fruit picking speed by half in order not to discourage completely a youngster during his first day on the ladder, but he simply could not wait the many years to be greeted by a former pupil, now a mature man, who might say, "You probably don't remember me, Professor Hoffman, but you taught me geometry. . . ."

With the realization in 1941 that serpentine outcroppings often supported unusual populations of plants, Freed began a series of botanical trips which eventually brought his collections over the 4000 mark. Among

his collections from remote and little-known serpentine areas is the type specimen of *Haplopappus ophitidis* (J. T. Howell) Keck. An *Allium* collected by Freed is likely to be the type of a new species. Especially in the genus *Streptanthus*, in which he published two new species in 1952, Freed's numerous collections have increased greatly our knowledge of variation and geographic distribution.

When World War II ended and gasoline, as well as new vehicles, became readily available, Freed purchased a Jeep in which he and Jimmy traveled widely in search of serpentine and "Streps." Jimmy's death in June, 1953, following their return from an extensive collecting trip in the Southwest, was a blow from which Freed found it almost impossible to recover. A trip to the Piedmont of North Carolina to visit Jimmy's relatives and the thoughtful solicitude of friends finally restored in Freed his former interests.

On 7 April 1955 Freed married Blanche Lenora Griden, who survives him. Blanche's lively interest in Freed's botanical studies and her devoted care during the trying time of Freed's stroke and his lengthy and arduous convalescence have endeared her to those of us who came to know her through Freed.

Freed's ties with the profession of botany were primarily with members of the California Botanical Society and the personnel of the Herbarium at Berkeley. He corresponded rather regularly with Bacigalupi, Carter, Kruckeberg, McMillan, Mason, Morrison, and others interested in serpentine, *Streptanthus*, or both. His collections, his watercolor sketches, especially of *Streptanthus*, and his voluminous notes on various sections of this genus are on deposit in the Herbarium of the University of California at Berkeley.—JOHN L. MORRISON, State University, College of Forestry, Syracuse University.

CLEARED CARDIOPARCON LATE-ALATUM LESQ., CORDAITEAN SEEDS FROM MICHIGAN¹

J. F. DAVIDSON

Arnold (1948) described *Spermatites cylix* from the Big Chief No. 8 mine at St. Charles, Michigan, as appearing to be the apical portion of a very large spore. The present account may throw some light upon the nature of the object so designated, while extending our knowledge of the material previously identified (Arnold, 1949) as *Cardiocarpon late-alatum* Lesq.

The Cordaitean seed that Lesquereux described as *Cardiocarpon late-alatum* (1879, Pl. LXXXV, figs. 46, 47; 1880, p. 568) is a small, rounded, slightly cordate body, about 9 mm. wide and 10 mm. long. The nucule,

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